March 6, 2024

Dear Governor Healey and Lieutenant Governor Driscoll,

We are sending this letter with over 168 organizations and 377 individuals who join us in expressing our deep gratitude for your commitment to early education and care and school age programs this fiscal year. We are excited to see you prioritize these investments in a year with a difficult economic environment and limited revenue growth.

We are particularly grateful for the inclusion of the following investments in addition to many others in the sector:

- **\$475 million** in annual funding to sustain the Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) operational funding for early education and care (EEC) providers;
- **\$75 million** to increase access to EEC financial assistance for additional families
- **\$20 million** to increase the reimbursement rate for providers who accept family financial assistance, bringing it closer to the cost of care; and
- **\$15.5 million** to expand the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI), which supports local communities to expand preschool in the mixed delivery system.

Your continued support and advocacy for such critical components demonstrates your dedication to creating a robust and accessible early education and care system for all Massachusetts families. Thank you for your leadership, as these investments not only address immediate needs, but also lay the foundation for further systemic change.

The Commonwealth Cares for Children (C3) operational grant program supports the critical infrastructure of child care for all children and families in Massachusetts, providing a stable source of foundational revenue to address day-to-day operational costs. We are leading the nation - Massachusetts is one of just a few states to continue this essential funding stream after the expiration of the federal program.

The C3 grant program is stabilizing the sector - the state's capacity has rebounded and now exceeds pre-pandemic capacity, enrollment has increased and programs are serving a higher number of children. The funding is primarily going towards workforce-related expenses, including existing payroll and benefits and investments in salary increases without passing on the costs to parents.

Over the past few years, Massachusetts has made substantial and necessary improvements to the rate of reimbursement for financial assistance, bringing it closer to the actual cost of providing care and federal benchmarks. However, the rate remains 20-30% below the cost of care and what is charged in the private market. Your budget's investment in the reimbursement rate will improve access to child care financial assistance by increasing the number of programs that are willing and able to accept vouchers, allow programs to invest in quality, and directly raise workforce salaries for subsidized child care providers.

Your proposed rate increase, coupled with the C3 operational grant program, will continue to shrink the gap between the financial assistance provided to programs on behalf of eligible families and the actual cost of delivering services. Once this critical milestone is achieved, we can begin to look at costs associated with increased educator salaries and start to make meaningful progress on educator compensation.

Your investments in child care affordability also recognize the importance of supporting working families. This funding will provide access to child care financial assistance for families currently on the waitlist and allows for the prioritization of specific populations including staff working in licensed early education, out of school time and residential facilities.

Additionally, your plan to expand preschool access through the Commonwealth Preschool Partnership Initiative (CPPI) underscores the state's commitment to fostering early learning environments across the mixed delivery system. Your investment in this program recognizes the vital role family child care programs, center-based programs, and school districts play in the delivery of preschool. By fostering local partnerships and encouraging collaboration, we can create a seamless and inclusive and equitable early educational experiences for every child.

These investments ensure a comprehensive approach to financial stability, addressing both the operational needs of child care providers and the affordability concerns of families, ultimately fostering a robust and sustainable child care market.

Thank you for your investment.

Please contact Amy O'Leary at <u>aoleary@strategiesforchildren.org</u> if you need additional information.

Thank you!

INDIVIDUALS

Abby Shapiro, Watertown Abigail Sanchez, Springfield Aditi Subramaniam. Statewide Adrienne Armstrong, Roxbury Agma María Sweeney, Westfield Alfred Spittler, Milford Ali Ricketson, Westwood Alison, Haverhill Amanda Glennon, Boston Amanda Gorner, Dorchester Amanda Motisi . Turners Falls Amanda Timms, Belchertown Amie Richard, Worcester Amy Bamforth, Cambridge Amy Fehr, Statewide Ana Nieto, Cambridge

Andrea Witherell, Attleboro Andrew Balson, Newton Angeline Bombard, Lawrence Ann Cameron Casasanta, Charlestown Anna Goodkind, Brookline Anne Covino, Worcester Annie Wohleber, Jamaica Plain Anthony Rossi, N/A April Jasak-Bangs, Belchertown Avesha Cammaerts, Boston Ban Almahfodh-Graime, Watertown Barbara Arnold, Carlisle Becky DelVecchio, Holliston Belmari Cruz, Worcester Benita Danzing, Newton Betsey Rivera, Leominster

Bexi Perez, Boston Bita Reilly, Townsend Blair Aiello, Easthampton Brenda Corey, Easthampton Brenda Powers, Easton Brian Gold, Boston Bridget James, South Hadley Brooke Couch Freeland, Chilmark Cadv Audette and Kelly Garvey Pellagrini, Boston Caitlin Maddix, Watertown Carmen Leon, Westborough Carmen Robles, Haverhill Carol Nolan, Somerville Carole Charnow, Bedford Carole Sullivan, Needham Caroline Gillis, Abington Caroline Hanna, Amherst Carolyn Canina, Cambridge Catherine Salvaggio, Tewksbury Cathleen Farrell, Medfield Cathy Karowski, Springfield Cecile Tousignant, Fitchburg Chantei Alves, Roslindale & Boston Charles Carignan, Boston Charles Homer, Brookline Chelsey Lonczak, Holyoke Cherish Casey, South End & Jamaica Plain Cheryl Hovey, Boston Cheryl Lewis, Hyde Park Cheryl Provost, Longmeadow Chris Shumate, Milton Christina Cavanaugh, Springfield Christine Ashman, Brookline Christine Devanna-Rodakis. Everett Christine Kelley, Reading Christine L. Holmes, Holden Christine Ward, Massachusetts Christopher Marino, Statewide Christopher O'Keeffe, Worcester Christy Higgins, Worcester Christy Little, Belchertown Cindy Horgan, North Eastham Claire, Boston Clarence Jeffrey Little, Mattapan Claudette Jules, Malden Colleen Kennedy-Mello, New Bedford Craig Simpson, Dorchester Cristine Trayner, Lawrence Cynthia M Green, Everett D'Lynn Healey, Granby Danielle Barbibay, Florence Danielle Morrow, Douglas Dannielle Pinson, Mattapan Darlene J Howland, Wellesley

David Post, Statewide Dawn DiStefano, Springfield Deanne St Pierre . Westborough Deb McConnell, Wellesley Deborah Kneeland Keegan, Chelsea, Everett, Revere, Peabody, Winthrop Dejon Rice, Greater Boston Delia Salluce, West Boylston Denise Galford-Koeppel, Natick Derek Rossi, Hudson Derly Caballero, Malden Deziana Lewis, Westborough Dianne Spittler, Milford Dina C. Castro, Statewide Dodi Swope, Worcester Don Hawley, Concord Donmarie Boutilette-Smith, Oxford Donna Connelly, Peabody Donna Fils-Aime, N/A Donna Housman, N/A Donna M. Denette, Granby Donna Rose, Springfield Doris Frechette, Lowell Dorothy Williams, Dorchester Dr. Ellie Friedland, Boston Edita Mendoza, Worcester Edna Cabral. Woburn Edna Cabral, Woburn Eglise M. Corchado, Boston Elaine Pender, Orleans Eleonora Villegas-Reimers, Belmont Elise Weller, Pittsfield Elizabeth Bronson, Southampton Elizabeth Charland-Tait. Holvoke Elizabeth Keating, Cambridge Elizabeth LaGuerre, Granby Elizabeth Pufall Jones, Winthrop Ellen Dietrick, Needham Heights Ellen Medvitz, Amesbury Ellen Kaslauskas. Millburv Emily O'Brien, Watertown Emma Baar-Bittman, Easthampton Erica Pease, South Hadley Erica Reed, Beverly Erin Bunnell, Wakefield Etta Rosen, Boston Eva Marks, Roxbury Eva Tejeda, Mattapan Eve Gilmore, Worcester Evelyn Disla, Lawrence Fernanda Campbell, Newton Frances Velazquez, Boston Francis Ryan, Rockland Gail Ader, Sharon

Gerlinde Hossain-Endl, Beighton Gillian Budine, Erving, Leverett, New Salem, Shutesbury and Wendell Gina Ocasion, Easthampton Glenny Alonzo, Centerville Gloria Valentin, Hyde Park Gregg Neighborhood House, Lynn Grizette Garriquez, Easthampton & West Springfield Guinevere Arthur Vanhorne. Southampton Hally Ferretra, Middleboro Harold A Blanco, Springfield Harriet Yoffee, Brookline Heidi Given , Somerville Hilary Odoy, Rowley Holly Sheils, Carver, Plymouth, Kingston, Pembroke, Norwell Ilaria Fiorenza, Worcester Ivone Dossantos, Boston Jade-Monae', Cambridge Jaime Shepard, Wellesley Hills James Perrin, Brookline Jan Gilpin, Newton Jane Cohen, Framingham Jane Rivera, East Longmeadow Janis Santos, Ludlow Jason Williams, Amherst Jayleese Le Blanc, Wareham Jean Fahey, N/A Jean Walsh, Shrewsbury Jeffrey Collett, South Hadley Jeffrey R Dziama, Wellesley Hills Jen Godlesky, Northampton Jennifer Shelsy, Lanesboro Jennifer Stoner. Sherborn Jennipher Ray, Charlestown Jessica Marcellino, South Hadley Jessica Mcgrath, Newton Jessie Vogel, Rowley Jo Ann Borinski, Clinton Joanne Gravell. Worcester Joelle Auguste, Boston John Lippitt, Reading Jonie Latimer-Brady, Ayer Joseph D Julez, Malden Joy Hunton, Westboro Judith A. Cody, Beverly Julie Asher, Cambridge Justine Mercado, Westborough Justus Guerrieri, Longmeadow Kaitlyn Bean, Boston Kaori Hattori de Panepinto, Cambridge Karen Del'Olio, Worcester Karen Ralls, Lowell Karin Pilgrim, Easthampton

Karla, Boston Kate Barrand, Roxbury Kate Harrington, Amherst Katerina Hassapis, Statewide Katey Grossman, Franklin Katharine Bittner, Longmeadow Katharyn Hok, Melrose Katherine von Haefen, Pittsfield Kathleen A. Strub-Richards. Ed.D., Greenfield Kathleen Bailer. Somerville Kathleen Carrese Merrell, Medfield Kathleen Treglia, New Bedford Kathryn Dempsey, Florence Kathy Lafferty, South Boston Katie Edwards, Amherst Katie Mayshak, Needham Katie Meccariello, Granby Katny Modigliani, N/A Keira Durrett, Easthampton Kelley Foley, N/A Kelly Kulsrud, Cambridge Kelly M. Poirot, North Adams Kelly Marion, Pittsfield Kelly Phillips, North Adams Kendra Bryce, Fitchburg Kim Bennett, Canton Kim Davenport. Worcester Kim Davis, Acton Kim Dion, Statewide Kim Welch, Tewksbury Kira Wilke, Natick Kori Bardige, Somerville Kristen Allen, Blackstone Kristvn Gleason . Granby Krongkan Bovornkeeratiroj, Boston Krystal Hinton, Lynn Latifah Hasan, Boston Laura McGowan, Dedham Lauren Cilley, Bolton Lauren Cook. Boston Lauren Dalton, North Easton Lauren Galvano, Sandwich Laurie Singer, North Adams Leah Falkowski, Beverly Lesley Kinney, Medway, Framingham, Marlboro, Northbridge Leslie Baker, Webster Liana Laughlin, Cambridge Licet Lugo, Fall River Lila Rodriguez, Roxbury Liliana Sepulveda, East Boston Linda Hyde, Worcester Linda Schumacher, Holliston Linda Stansbury, Boston

Lindsey Pag, Templeton Linette Roche, Holden Lissette Lapaix, Jamaica Plain Lora Reyes, Westfield Lorelle S Arpino, Roslindale Lori, Lincoln Lori Thames, Randolph Lorna Leo, Lincoln Luisa Palladino, Westborough Luz del Alba Frómeta De Matos, New Bedford Lydia Icke, Statewide Madeleine Werner, Somerville Marcela M. Simpson, Easthampton Marcia Gadson-Harris, Springfield Marge Mahoney, Sutton Maria Moeller, Andover Maria Quezada, Roxbury Maria Stotts, Boston Mariah Levine, Holyoke Marianny Rodriguez, Somerville Marie Bossi, East Boston Marie Enochty, Brewster Mark Reppucci, Longmeadow Marleny, Fall River Marlo Tersigni, Boston Marta Zuluaga, Chicopee Mary Ann E Ziomek, Amherst Mary Kinsella, Dorchester Mary Walachy, Westfield Maryann O'Brien, Boston Masiel Disla, Lawrence Maura Mendoza, Somerville Maureen Atwood, Pittsfield & Great Barrington Maureen McCarthy, Marblehead Maureen McCarthy, Marblehead Melinda Ailes, Mattapoisett Melissa Borgeson, North Oxford Melissa Dulla, Brookline Melissa O'Neill, South Hadley Melissa Tariick. Cheshire Mellissa Oppedisano, Waltham Melora Balson. Statewide Michelle Ramsdell, Newton Mindy Goodin, Easthampton Minyi Lin, Boston Morgan Spencer, Longmeadow Nadine Premo, Worcester Nancy Ostroff, Needham Nancy Pynchon, Lowell Nancy Toso, Hamilton Nancy Ward, Northampton Natasha Mason, Multi City Neil White, Amherst Nina Talayco, North Chelmsford

Noelle Pina, Centerville Nora Labiad, Methuen Norka Hurtado Amparo, Dorchester Oscar Lopez, Statewide Parisa Maryam fakhri, West Roxbury Pat Goldstein, Concord Patricia Keenan, Sharon Patricia Sinclair, Rutland Patrick Lennon, Westfield Paula A. Echeverri-Durango, Springfield Pauline Cronin, Nantucket Peg Crowe, Malden Peg Sprague, Boston Peggy Chapman, Cohasset Rachel Bragin, Arlington Rachel Hart, Longmeadow Rebecca Mitchell, South Hadley Redina Byington, Leominster Regina McClay, J.D., N/A Renee Boynton-Jarrett, Boston Roberto Moran, Greater Boston Ronald Ferguson, Statewide Roxanne Morris, Easthampton Sadie Dybizbanski, Belchertown Sagrario Guerrero, Hudson Sandra Garofano, Dunstable Sara Hernandez-Rivera, Springfield Sara Liptak, Amherst Sara Reid, Easthampton Sarah Besse, Boston Sarah Mills, Statewide Sarah Patton, Shutesbury Sarah Siepierski, Salem Sarah W. Rose, Fairhaven Sarah Williams, Westfield Sarah Williams, Westfield Seth Johnson, Danvers Seth Lucas, Boston Shane Dunn, Roxbury Sharon Bunting, Harwich Sharon Romano, Leominster Shavon Drayton, Statewide Shawna Tobin, Northampton Sheila M Gould, Chicopee Sheilah Dooley, Worcester Stacy McHugh, Beverly Stacy Watts, Duxbury Stefanie Cronin. Woburn Stephanie M. Curenton, Ph.D., Canton Susan Benes, Newton Susan Kessler, Stoneham Susan Smith, Hvannis Suzette Abbott, Brookline Tammy Hoag, North Adams

Tara Maroney , Easthampton Tashalee Jackson, Boston Taylor Cullen, Holden Theodore Kokoros, Watertown Theresa Jordan, Boston Therese D Brigley, Chesterfield Tom Monks, Boston Tomás Gonzalez , Statewide Toquyen Zorn, Cambridge Vanessa Pashkoff, Longmeadow Verishka Thomas , Worcester Vicki Bartolini, Wheaton College Vilma Reyna Ibarra, Worcester Vinuta Desai, Westborough Wayne Ysaguirre, Boston Wendy O'Leary, Spencer Wendy Provencher, Becket, Cummington, Dalton, Hinsdale, Peru, Washington, Windsor Whitney Smith, Boston William Lehrer, Multi Community Yaskara Cruz, Jamaica Plain Ye Zheng, Easthampton Yesenia Gil, Leominster Ylena then, Fall River Zach Mitchell, Jamaica Plain Zayda Vallejo, Worcester

ORGANIZATIONS

18 Degrees, Pittsfield ABC Home Day Care , Longmeadow Acton Cooperative School, Acton Adrienne's Day Academy, Roxbury All About Children, Inc, Easthampton Amherst College, Amherst Amplify Latinx, Statewide Ayer Kiddie Depot, Ayer Belchertown Day School, Belchertown Berkshire United Way, Pittsfield Berrybrook School, Inc., Duxbury Beverly Children's Learning Centers, Inc., Beverly Birch Tree Montessori School, Haverhill Boston Area Reggio Inspired Network (BARIN), New England Boston Children's Hospital, Statewide Boston Children's Museum. Bedford Boston Outdoor Preschool Network, Boston Boston's Bridge To Excellence, Greater Boston Boys & Girls Clubs of Dorchester, Dorchester Burlington Day Care and Preschool, Woburn Busy Bees Preschool, East Longmeadow Cambridgeport Children's Center, Cambridge Campus Child Care, Inc, Boston and Cambridge Cape Cod Chamber of Commerce. Centerville Cape Cod Children's Place, North Eastham Cape Cod Community College, West Barnstable Catholic Charities, Regional Cedar Childcare, Cambridge CFCE of the NS and Peabody Public Schools , Peabody Charlestown Nursery School, Charlestown Child Care of the Berkshires, Inc., North Adams Child Development, Roxbury Child Tools Consulting, Fitchburg Children's Center of Lexington, Lexington Children's Investment Fund, Boston

Children's Montessori Center, Danvers Circle of Friends Preschool and Children's Center, Framingham City of Somerville, Somerville Clinton Early Childhood Resource Center, Clinton Commonwealth Children's Center, Boston Commonwealth Children's Fund, Statewide Commonwealth Family Childcare, Inc., N/A Community Action, Inc., Haverhill Coordinated Family and Community Engagement Grantee, Becket, Cummington, Dalton, Hinsdale, Peru, Washington, Windsor Couch Family Foundation, Chilmark Council of Social Concern, Woburn Creative Community Childcare a DBA of the First UU Church of Milford, Milford Crispus Attucks Children's Center. Dorchester Cushman Scott Children's Center, Amherst Davenport Child Care, Inc, Chesterfield Dedham Community House, Greater Boston Dottie's Family Childcare, Inc, Dorchester Dulla Daycare, Brookline Early Care and Education Consortium, Statewide and National Early Learning Access, Canton Early Learning Child Care Inc., New Bedford Early Learning of Medfield DBA Beginning Years, Medfield Eastern Bank, Statewide ECE Career Pathways, Lowell Echo Falls Preschool, Newton École Française Greater Boston, Chestnut Hill Economic Mobility Pathways (EMPath), Statewide Edward Street, Worcester Ellis Early Learning, Boston Everbrook Academy, Wellesley Hills

Family Services of Central MA, Children's Aid and Family Service, Statewide First Step Family Childcare, West Roxbury First UU Church of Milford, Milford For Kids Only Afterschool, Multi City/Town G3 Works , Salisbury Gladys Allen Brigham Community Center, Pittsfield Global Children School, Dunstable Grace Church Preschool. Oxford Greater Boston Early Educators Network, Boston Greater Lowell Family YMCA, Lowell Grove Hall Child Development Center, Mattapan Half Pints Learning Center Inc., Tewksbury Healthy Families, Central Middlesex Horizons For Homeless Children, Roxbury Housman Institute, N/A Infant and Early Childhood Mental Health Roundtable of Franklin, Hampshire & North Quabbin Counties, Shutesbury Jack and Jill Preschool, North Oxford Jumpstart for Young Children, Statewide Kidbridge Learning Centers LLC, Carver, Plymouth, Kingston, Pembroke, Norwell Kiddie Kollege Early Learning Center, Hyannis Kidoodles Learning Center, Holden KinderCare Learning Companies, Nationwide Kings Corner Learning Center, Leominster Learning Prep School, N/A Little Explorers Daycare LLC, Templeton Little People's College, New Bedford Little Sprouts, LLC, Statewide MA Business Coalition for Early Childhood Education, Statewide Magic Garden Infant & Toddler and Children's Center , Lincoln Magical Beginnings Imagine, Statewide Magical Beginnings Learning Center, Wakefield Main Street Learning Academy, Tewksbury Massachusetts Afterschool Partnership (MAP), Statewide Massachusetts Alliance for Foster Families (MAFF), Cheshire Massachusetts Alliance of Boys & Girls Clubs, Massachusetts Massachusetts Child Care Resource and Referral Network, statewide Needham Children's Center Inc, Needham Neighborhood Villages, statewide Newton North High School Early Education & Care Program, Newton Nonotuck Community School, Northampton Orleans Elementary School, Orleans ParentChild+, Statewide and National Paula's Barn Inc. Child Care, Springfield

Pediatric Development Center Inc., Pittsfield and Great Barrington People Incorporated, Statewide Pernet Family Health Service, Inc., Worcester Progressive Democrats of Massachusetts, Statewide Project Connect--Attleboro CFCE, Attleboro Project: Play2Learn, Statewide Rainbow Child Development Center, Worcester Raising a Reader MA. Statewide Rock and Roll Daycare, Cambridge Sacred Heart Preschool and Child Care Center, Fitchbura Sandwich Preschool Partnership for Families and Preschools, Sandwich Second Church Nursery School, Newton Seven Hills Foundation & Affiliates, Regional SFC Advocacy Network, Statewide SkillWorks, Boston SolBe Learning and Two Little Owls Schoolhouse, Boston Somerville Family Learning Collaborative/Somerville Public Schools, Somerville Somerville Partnership for Young Children, Somerville South Boston Neighborhood House, South Boston South Shore Family Network, South Shore Square One, Springfield Strategies for Children. Statewide Teach Plus, Statewide Temple Beth Shalom, Needham Heights The Basics, Inc., Statewide The Boston Foundation, Boston The Children First Center, Granby The Children's Meetinghouse, Concord The Commuity Group, Lawrence, Lawrence The Education Trust, MA, Statewide The Family Cooperative, Watertown The HeartWell Institute, Worcester The Institute for Education and Professional Development, Inc., Uxbridge The Peanut Gallery. Middleboro The Village Common Children's Center, Townsend The Williston Children Center, Easthampton Together for Kids Coalition, Worcester Town of Nantucket CFCE & PC+, Nantucket Trust Center for Early Education, Brookline United South End Settlements, Boston United Way of Greater New Bedford, Fairhaven United Way of Massachusetts Bay, Multi Community Urban League of Springfield Inc., Springfield Valley Opportunity Council, Westfield Village PreSchool, Roslindale Vital Village Networks, Inc, Boston Wellesley Community Children's Center, Wellesley Westfield Puerto Rican Association, Inc., Westfield

Wheaton College Early Education Center, Norton Wild Garden of Childhood,LLC, Northampton Women Encouraging Empowerment (WEE), Revere Woodside Children's Center, Amherst Worcester Community Action Council, Worcester Yakneane LLC, Southampton YMCA of Greater Boston, Boston YWCA of Greater Boston, Boston YWCA Westborough , Westborough YWCA Greater Newburyport, Newburyport YWCA Malden, Malden YWCA Northeastern Massachusetts , Lawrence YWCA of Central Mass, Worcester